

## Youth Advisory Committee

### Meeting Minutes ~ February 10, 2014

Present: Patrick Gleason (Chair), Ian Gleason, Honora Hammett

City Council: Rodney Roberts, Liaison

Staff: Joe McNeal, Liaison

Guests: Sophie Bernheisel, Katia Cavegelli, Tim Cohen-Mitchell

The meeting was called to order by Patrick Gleason at 6:32 p.m. in room 112 at the Greenbelt Community Center

Mr. Gleason welcomed the guests in attendance and thanked them for their interest in serving on the Youth Advisory Committee. Mr. Gleason introduced himself and asked those in attendance to also introduce themselves as well.

Mr. Gleason reviewed some of the past work of the YAC, their accomplishments and gave a brief overview of the function and role of the Committee.

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the May 30, 2013 meeting. They were approved unanimously 3-0 in favor.

The committee discussed methods for recruitment of new members. It was noted the following efforts were made including direct contact with students at Eleanor Roosevelt High School (ERHS), e-mails to the Principals at Eleanor Roosevelt High School and the Greenbelt Middle School. Ms. Bernheisel advised that she had been recruited to join the committee by Ms. Hammett. Members were provided with a copy of the application to join the committee and asked to share with other prospective members. It was noted the application can also be found on the city website. There was discussion on the age requirements for membership. Mr. McNeal advised he would consult with the City Clerk to confirm requirements and report back at the next meeting. The committee expressed a desire to recruit members from areas of Greenbelt outside of the “old” part of town to make the committee more representative of the community.

The committee considered changing the regular schedule for meeting days and times because of schedule conflicts with members. It was agreed that the second Monday of every month at 6:30 p.m. would work best for all in attendance. There was discussion of the meeting location. In the past, meetings had regularly been held at the Youth Center. A suggestion was made to move the meeting location to other areas of Greenbelt, keeping in mind possible limitations of members to travel to other areas of Greenbelt, all seemed in favor of moving the meeting locations around. Mr. McNeal advised that it could be possible to use a city vehicle to transport members if needed.

The committee reviewed comments received from the work session the City Council held with Advisory Board and Committee Chairs. The committee appreciated the comments

and suggestions made on improving communication ways to make the committee more involved.

Mr. Gleason inquired on the status of the referral on a proposed curfew. Mr. Roberts advised that the City Council had received the report from YAC and other Boards and Committees and determined a curfew was not needed.

Mr. Gleason inquired as to the status of replacing the basketball rims at the Mandan Fields. In addition he gave a brief background on the issues surrounding their removal. Mr. McNeal advised that the City sent a letter to Windsor Green Home Owners Association seeking their input on re-installation of the rims but no response had been received. The committee expressed their desire for a follow up letter to be sent since many months had elapsed with no response. Mr. McNeal said he would follow up with appropriate City staff on the matter. Mr. Roberts indicated his intent to follow up on the matter as well.

Items of “old business” were discussed with no interest in pursuing further action.

The committee engaged in a round table discussion of what members and prospective members liked, didn’t like and items they would like to pursue in the future. Mr. Gleason asked Mr. Roberts about future referrals from Council. Mr. Roberts advised that the Council values the input and advice of the YAC and that the Council will seek their input on a broad spectrum of matters not just those related to “youth” issues.

It was noted that the committee has had concerns with the current condition of ball fields in Greenbelt. It was asked if use by youth sports groups could be rotated to minimize impact. Mr. McNeal noted that staff is working on a ball field demand study in order to address this concern. It was also noted that the City is working with the Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) to negotiate a joint use agreement for use of the lighted ball fields at the new Greenbelt Middle School. It is hoped with the execution of this agreement some of the heavy use can be shifted to other fields.

There was discussion on the possible use of space in the old Greenbelt Middle School. The committee was advised that the PGCPS has begun renovation of the space in anticipation of the Robert Goddard School moving into the space in September of 2014. In addition, the City had been in discussions with the PGCPS for possible use of about 5 rooms in the space but that there have not been any recent discussions of the matter since the renovation began.

Committee members expressed concerns about the sense of “separation” that exists between various areas of the City. They indicated they understood there are physical barriers that impact connectivity but wished to consider possible ways to improve a city wide sense of community.

Members were asked their opinion on ways to make their involvement in the committee more enjoyable and rewarding. Suggestions included a trip to Annapolis to observe how the state legislature works, a trip to the University of Maryland and as noted earlier, moving meeting locations various areas of town to gain a greater understanding of what is offered throughout the community. Members were asked to consider other ways to make their service on the committee more rewarding and report back at the next meeting.

There was discussion on how youth in Greenbelt find out about various activities, events, etc. that would appeal to the youth in Greenbelt other than the Greenbelt News Review. Is there a central calendar of events or some other outlet that provides a comprehensive list of things going on. It was noted the City maintains a website, Facebook page, twitter page, etc. where information is shared. Members shared that much of their information on events and activities is received from friends and family members.

Mr. Gleason thanked all in attendance for coming to the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

**Minutes Approved by Unanimous Vote 5-0 on May 12, 2104**